In August, New York did something that was unthinkable: offering massive subsidies to old nuclear reactors so they DON’T shutter. NY’s decision has implications for New England, with nuclear corporations lobbying for similar bailouts and subsidies. A sneak attack to subsidize Millstone 2 and 3 reactors failed in CT this year; it is expected to resurface in 2017. With a Trump administration, the industry and friendly federal allies will lobby for a national subsidy for old nukes.

The NYS subsidies are undermining the progress resulting from the closure of Vermont Yankee. Entergy announced plans to close both Pilgrim in MA in 2019; and the FitzPatrick reactor in NY in early 2017. But as a result of the $7.6 billion bailout NYS Gov Cuomo pushed through, FitzPatrick may not shut down after all. As part of a back room deal to pass the subsidies, Entergy agreed to sell FitzPatrick to nuclear giant Exelon, which owns the 3 other reactors to be subsidized in NYS.

Ginna, another NY reactor that was slated to close next year, you got to be kidding! So Entergy is attempting to cut its losses in the Northeast! This includes selling the Fitzpatrick reactor in NYS to Exelon, shutting Pilgrim in 2019, and now selling Vermont Yankee to NorthStar. By relieving itself of this albatross, Entergy eliminates its obligations for site remediation and guarding the HLW. It relieves itself of any liability. In exchange, it turns over a wholly inadequate decommissioning fund to NorthStar. If Entergy couldn’t cleanup the reactor site with an inadequate decommissioning fund, what is NorthStar going to do? It all sounds good- cleanup and release of the site. But is it? Entergy came into Vermont with a song and dance about acquiring an old nuke, making it whole again and making a profit. Now its shuttered and selling the decommissioning fund to a corporation with a lot of promises—a fast track of fuel to dry storage by 2018 rather than 2020, site cleanup beginning in 2020 and done in 2029 and potential removal of HLW to interim storage and then site remediation and release! What could be wrong with this picture? A dirty and cheap cleanup! CAN fought the inadequate.

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Nuclear Decommissioning
Citizens Advisory Panel

The Vermont Yankee Nuclear Decommissioning Citizens Advisory Panel (NDCAP) held several meetings since the last issue of the CAN-DID Press.

At the June 23, 2016 meeting the panel received input from staff members representing Sen. Bernie Sanders and Rep. Peter Welch. It was reported that Rep. Welch is supporting legislation to approve the concept of interim high-level waste storage. This ill-conceived scheme would have thousands of shipments of dangerous radioactive waste moving, over several decades, to an above ground parking lot dump. In the event a permanent repository is located and constructed, the waste would have to be moved again! This is an expensive and dangerous policy initiative.

At the Sept 23, 2016 meeting the issue of groundwater intrusion into the turbine building at VY was discussed at length. The steady volume of tritiated water that Entergy is collecting, storing, and shipping for processing is expensive and will likely remain a time consuming burden on the decommissioning process.

SOLAR PANEL RAFFLE EXTENDED TO VALENTINE’S DAY!
The election of Trump has created a new political landscape that will require CAN and our allies to fight new battles and revisit some old ones. Your support is critical to help us prepare for the upcoming challenges. Buy a raffle ticket!
High Level Nuclear Waste: Boondoggles, Propaganda and Environmental Justice

Although the nuclear industry & Federal government committed to create a solution for high-level nuclear waste (HLNW) disposal, no acceptable solution exists. Federal legislation mandated a repository & Nevada was targeted & billions expended to establish Yucca Mountain. This boondoggle failed due to site unsuitability, corruption, inadequate safeguards & Nevada’s opposition. As the wrangling over Yucca continues, the industry has a pressing need to create some solution since dangerous waste piling up at reactor sites undermines its position that nuclear is “clean and safe.” Interim storage sites do not have to meet the strict environmental standards that have plagued Yucca Mountain. The sites targeted for “interim disposal,” like the sites selected for operation, are routinely low-income, rural, people of color and Native American communities. The industry pits nuclear communities against each other - reactor communities fear inad- piling up at reactor sites undermines its position that nuclear is a pressing need to create some solution since dangerous waste.

The concept has been in place in British Columbia since 1999. Rep. Michael Conway (R-TX) has introduced the “Interim Consolidated Storage Act”. The bill would amend the Nuclear Waste Policy Act to allow for the shipment and storage of HLNW at an additional interim site. The “parking lot” would likely be sited in Andrews County, Texas. This proposal is a cynical, shortsighted ploy by a desperate industry. The negative impact on the environment is enormous and cannot be ignored by reactor communities now saddled with the waste. States, as well as reactor communities, fear the industry and Federal government will abandon the deadly waste and abdicate its responsibility to find a safe & permanent solution. As understandable as these fears are, reactor and waste communities must work together to support a scientifically sound and environmentally just solution.

NEW ENGLAND NUCLEAR WASTE TOURS: We will organize tours, bringing organizers from the Southwest to New England to educate and share their concerns about parking lot dumps and the targeting of immiserated communities. If you are interested in your community participating in the tours contact CAN for more information.

- Deb Katz; - CAN

Citizens Advisory Panel continued from page 1

It was also reported that Entergy and the State of VT had reached an agreement regarding a new emergency plan. The plan is very much scaled back from the version that was in place through the years when the plant was operating. The Vermont Div of Emergency Mgt and Homeland Security provided details and re- sponded to questions from panel members and the public. Entergy will be paying for the plan because the legislature provided for cost recovery from the company for any amendment to the budget bill during the 2016 legislative session.

On Nov 8, 2016 Entergy announced its intention to sell VY and transfer the NRC license to NorthStar Inc. At this time details and specific environmental and financial information are not available. The transaction will have to be reviewed by the VTs Public Service Board and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The announcement claims that the sale will provide for a faster clean-up and transfer of spent fuel to dry cask storage. CAN will be following the proposal and analyzing the details as the process moves forward. As they say, the devil is in the details.

- Chris Williams – CAN/VCAN, NIRS

You Got To Be Kidding!

continued from page 1

cleanup of Yankee Rowe and Connecticut Yankee. Those utili- ties had to get rate increases to cover cost over runs. Want an example? Yankee Rowe cost $39 million to build and over $700 million to cleanup. Ratepayers were stuck paying for the escalat- ing cleanup costs. Yankee Rowe has continued to pay cost overruns till 2015 for CT Yankee’s cleanup. With other nuclear decommissions, nuclear corporations transfer its license to a cleanup company like Energy Solutions and then when cleanup is completed, transfers the license to another company. Not so with NorthStar—it will retain the license for the dry cask stor- age. What corporation would want such a liability? NorthStar is banking on the Texas waste parking lot dump becoming a reality to make a profit. It wants to ship the high level-waste to Texas to cut corners abdicating responsibility for a permanent solution.

Entergy must win approval from the VT Public Service Board as well as the Yankee to NorthStar. This is a radical change in NRC licensing. Understand this—it will be very hard for the state of Vermont to resist this proposal. It wants the waste gone. In fact we all want the waste gone. But do we want our money sent to a parking lot in Texas lacking environmental safeguards and no actual “solution!”

Who Is NorthStar Anyway?

NorthStar specializes in demolition, hazardous materi- als abatement, soil and solid remediation and site restoration. NorthStar would be working with three partners to handle the cleanup— AREVA, Burns & McDonnell and Waste Control Specialists. WCS’ role is important because it will be “responsible for waste management, packaging, transportation and disposal.”, WCs opened the controversial low-level waste dump in Andrews County, Texas. Entergy plans to accelerate transfer of VY’s HLNW to dry cask storage by two years. Entergy claims NorthStar will complete decommissioning and clean up in nine years. Sounds great right? Unfortunately it’s not. In real- ity, Entergy is attempting to relieve itself of any liability for the Yankee site, and is turning it over to a new operator over to NorthStar. In all likelihood, the Vermont Yankee site would never be released for unrestricted use. Effective and thorough cleanup costs money—a lot of money. The Yankee Rowe site has yet to be released for unrestricted use 25 years later—even though it spent over $700 million and engaged in a rapid decommissioning.

And what about NorthStar? Would NorthStar actually be likely to face contamination problems on site or for leaking fuel casks in Texas? Would Entergy really be off the hook?

In November, the Justice Department filed an antitrust lawsuit blocking a merger of Energy Solutions and WCS—both are major players in Vermont Yankee’s cleanup. DOJ states that Energy Solutions should not be allowed to acquire Texas-based WCS, a subsidiary of NorthStar-the deal would create a “near monopoly” in decontamination waste disposal business leading to higher prices and lower quality service. So why should we believe NorthStar when the Feds argue that consolidation of the nuclear waste industry will lead to higher costs and substandard cleanup? The industry and clean-up cleanup with another limited liability corporation making big promises that it can’t deliver.

- Deb Katz; - CAN, Exec Dir

Nuclear Boondoggle continued from page 1

What’s it really about is politics: the governor is up for reelec- tion in 2018 and doesn’t want to deal with job losses in conserva- tive upstate counties. And that’s a political that crosses state lines, whether the issue is jobs or plain old corporate influence. With NYS as precedent, the push for subsidies in CT could gain momentum forcing ratepayers to cover nearly $5 billion in sub- sidies to Virginia-based Dominion, the owner of Millstone 2 and 3. And, if you think that’s tops, consider that Dominion that could be nearly $3 billion for Seabrook’s owners in Florida. This means New Englanders need to organize now to ensure these nuclear bailouts don’t gain ground, and steal our clean en- ergy dollars to prop up this failed industry. If we win this fight, we will make New England nuclear-free AND carbon-free. Stay tuned for more news and ways you can get involved.

But we also have to make sure these subsidies don’t go no- tional. In addition to costing New Englanders up to $8 billion to subsidize Millstone and Seabrook — and even more if Entergy decided to cancel Pilgrim’s closure and cash in – it would cost us up to $280 billion nationwide. We can’t afford to flush money down the nuclear drain, just to risk meltdowns and make another decade of radioactive waste. NIRS has started a petition opposing nuclear bailouts, to be delivered to the next President and every govern- or:


Fighting for Renewable Energy in Massachusetts - All Hands on Deck!  

Now that Trump is headed to the White House, we need to make sure that MA Gov Baker and the State House hear us loud and clear.

1. Restore Full Retail Net Metering Credits for community shared solar.
2. No Minimum Monthly Reliability or Fixed charges.
4. Establish Time of Use Rates.
5. 20% Solar PV by 2025!
6. Tell Governor & Representative

http://malegislature.gov/Search/FindLegislator
Tell Governor Baker, call 617-725-4005.

http://www.mass.gov/gov/constituent-services/contact- governor-office/

More Info: Solarizewv.org

Thanks!  

We couldn’t have done it without you:

Block Foundation • Lintilhac Foundation
Van Ewfel Foundation • Wadhams Action Network
Charlene DiVoky • Paul Burton • Lisa Clark
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